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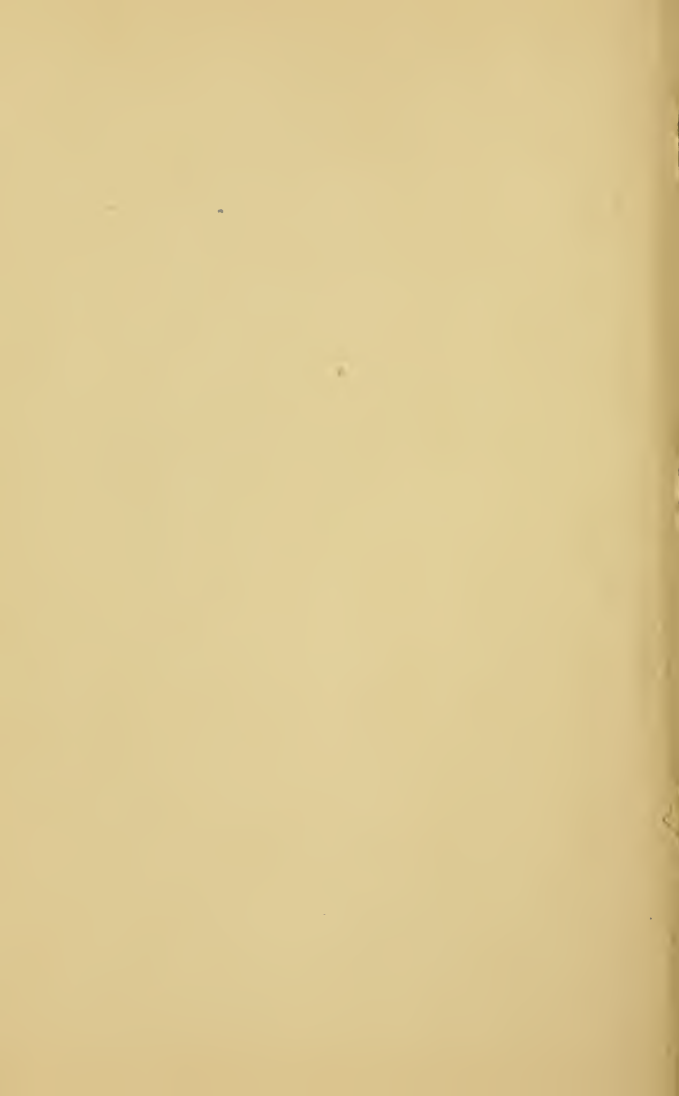
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# LEISURE-HOUR POEMS.

BY A STUDENT.

✓  
CHARLES K. MESCHTER,  
WORCESTER, PA.

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A. E. DAMBLY'S ESTATE, PRINTERS,  
SKIPPACK, PA.  
1894.

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## PREFACE.

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I had no thought of collecting and publishing these poems until it was suggested to me by some friends.

They were written, as the title suggests, during leisure hours of school and college days. Hence several of them touch on incidents peculiar to these places—my native home, Worcester; West Chester Normal School; and University of Pennsylvania.

*September 26, 1894.*

C. K. M.



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## LEISURE-HOUR POEMS.

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### Our Boyhood Fishing-Pool.

WHAT sport it was, in days gone by, to wile the hours  
away

Beside this cherished spot of yore, as on its banks we lay ;  
'Twas here the shade of some old tree would make this  
spot so cool

That, truantly, our lazy forms would steal down to this pool.

'Twas here that, through long summer days, the village  
urchins came

To angle in its dreamy depth and catch its finny game ;

'Twas here, when autumn's mellow days foretold the wan-  
ing year,

The rustic lads with trap and gun were certain to appear.

Here, when the bleak bare winter time made it a crystal  
sheet,

We'd trudge across the wintry waste to skim some daring  
feat.

And often on clear moonlight nights we boys assembled  
here

To have some good old winter sports upon its ice so clear.

Come, let us stroll across the marsh, down to this boyhood  
stream,

To lie upon its grassy banks and take a boyhood dream ;

Lie down beneath the young tree's shade upon that same  
green spot

Where, years ago, the parent shade protected this same plot.

A perfumed breeze is wafted from the orchard's mellow  
trees ;  
The wild-flowers on the upland-ridge give nectar to the  
bees ;  
I look beyond the crumbling bank into its dimpled tide  
And see the dimples on my cheeks have lost their youth-  
ful pride.

Oh, Time ! the changes thou hast wrought, since when I  
loitered here,  
Have made me stranger to these scenes and caused a  
straying tear,  
And oft amid the contests that affront me in life's school  
I love to dream those hours away beside our fishing-pool.

### The Maple by the Spring.

AH ! this stately old tree thrills my soul once more  
As I stroll 'neath its shade as in days of yore ;  
While its green matted dome keeps the sun's warm rays  
From the cool sparkling spring in warm summer days.

And the deep sombre shade in the maple tree  
Is a home for the owl ; here he sits wisely  
Through his queer narrow night and in blinking dreams  
Until the setting sun tells his day begins.

How the old cocoa-shell on the mossy stone  
Is enwrapped with the moss that for years has grown,  
But I pick up the cup, fill it to the brim  
And imbibe in its health with a childhood vim.

When the cool scented breeze of the Autumn blows,  
And gently tips the leaves ere their long repose,  
Then in all Nature's forest in its garb sublime  
None exceeds this maple of the olden time.

### An Aged Man's Soliloquy.

**A**N aged man was seated in his old arm-chair  
Before the smoky brightness of the oak-log's glare :  
He, undisturbed, sat musing o'er his long lost days ;  
O'er merry sports of childhood, and its peaceful plays.

No sound to break the stillness of the dark cold night  
Except the crackling embers, to his heart's delight :  
The angry wind grew milder in its deep full tone  
To unmolest the visions of the old man 'lone.

"Those many merry summers of my early time,  
How gladly I would lounge in its sweet sunshine  
Upon the flowered borders of the stream so cool,  
Or wade through blooming clover on my way to school.

"Those many joyous winters, enwrapt in a chill,  
Like me in scarf and buskins coasting on the hill ;  
I oft indulge so helpless in my flitting yore  
That I become delir'ous and long for it o'er.

"Could I but live life over, have chances again  
That now are lost, much better would I live it then ;  
But why neglect the present to dote o'er old glee  
And disregard one's future opportunity."

### Fair Worcester.

**F**AIR are your hills, though robed in winter's white or  
summer's green :

Fair are your vales ; and fair, the brooks meandering be-  
tween.

Fair is thy green and wooded brink where shade and sun-  
shine meets.

Fair, angling plots, and rocky bluffs, thy Cupid-like re-  
treats.

Here, nature has been generous, and art adorns thee well.  
 Here, one might think Old Ceres reigns, and Vesta thrusts  
 her spell.

Thou hast no torrid frigid tracts to blight thy landscape,  
 fair ;

But pleasant vales, and hills, and homes show naught but  
 thrifty care.

The prattling streamlet that strays through thy miniature  
 ravines

Delights the deep stream farther on, and lulls it into dreams.  
 Through deeply shaded groves it flows, then down some  
 hill it steals :

Through pastures, green ; and villages ; then creaks the  
 mill's old wheels.

What distant land need add more charms to plenty, peace,  
 content ?

Not all the beauties must be found in some imposing Trent.  
 Flow on, sweet streams, and bear your dreams ; and Boreas,  
 too, roar ;

And blow, sweet breeze, your siren leaves till time shall  
 be no more.

### The Autograph Album.

WHEN the toils of the day had been over,  
 Ere Somnus had brought his repose,—  
 In the twilight of thought we may call it,—  
 This album I drew from its close,  
 How the low-burning lamp-light adapted  
 Its dim hazy light to my mind.  
 Not a tree-toad was gargling his potions :  
 No zephyr was ruffling the blind.



It was thus when I read o'er the pages,—  
 That album when days knew not care,—  
 That they, too, like the lamp-light seemed dusty,  
 And dim were the epitaphs there.  
 With the breath of a sigh I dislodged  
 That veil of our old Father Time,  
 And the sere yellow leaves, as if beings,  
 Then whispered their prose and their rhyme.

Then unlimited vistas of visions  
 Arose and flit quickly away,  
 For the canvas for mind's magic pictures  
 Dispels like the mists of a May.  
 As I gazed o'er these typical emblems,  
 These emblems engraved by the pen,  
 I had laughed, I had wept at the motives  
 Suggestive of moods of all men.

Ah, such visions advanced and receded  
 As page after page had been read ;  
 Might a Raphael, Angelo, paint them,  
 They'd last until time shall have sped.  
 Might a Dante or Lowell depict them,  
 The ages would hallow their song ;  
 For there 're visions unpainted, unwritten,  
 That, wondrous, would awe mortal throng.

### A-Fishin'.

WUNST we went a-fishin',  
 My sister an' me,  
 Down in the meadow  
 'Side the willow tree.

There she kecht an eel  
 That scared us so much ;  
 Yet I pulled over  
 To kecht 'nother such.

O-o-h that eel looked  
 As snaky as it can  
 That we didn't want to  
 Touch it with our han.'

Purty soon I killed it  
 To take out the hook :  
 G-o-o-dness didn't we then  
 Stand 'round it and look !

### Reunion.

WELL, old school friend, how are you, pray ?  
 It's been long since we've met :  
 Ha, ha ! indeed you've changed so much,  
 But still I know you yet.  
 How are the boys, the boys you know  
 Who went with us to school ?  
 How oft we thought that we were great  
 When we but played the fool.  
 There's Bill, there's Sam, and Tom, and John,  
 Oh ! did we not have lots of fun ?

Come closer now ; how are those girls  
 Who've been our school mates, too ?  
 How's Kate, and Nan, and Mary Ann,  
 And your old sweetheart, Lou ?  
 Why, they will all be here to-night  
 To meet and greet us, Joe ;  
 And varied as their labors are  
 All meet to-night, you know.  
 Oasis-like in desert climes,  
 Such gatherings are through cycling times.

### Alumni Eve.

WE love to gather on this eve  
 And feast on what we here receive ;  
 To renovate a faded mind  
 With pleasant thoughts it once entwined ;  
 To reunite a scattered band  
 That's spreading over this wide land.

We yearly gather so that we  
 May share this pleasant company.  
 The waning thoughts that we hold dear  
 Are strengthened by our gathering here ;  
 For, as our school days are no more,  
 'Tis here we seem to live them o'er.

Now, as we view the dreamy past,  
 And chuckle o'er some madd'ning task,  
 We feast upon such thoughts so sweet  
 That we forget our past defeat.  
 But those attempts were not in vain  
 We left undone with puzzled brain.

They teach the lesson that, through life,  
 We must be patient in the strife :  
 For darkness of the blackest night  
 Is followed by the morning light ;  
 And great achievements have been won  
 By constant toil ere they were done.

We read the roll and see renown  
 Will deck some members with its crown,  
 While fancy's monument of years  
 Displays their names on topmost tiers.  
 Alas ! some reached that common doom  
 And now lie mouldering in the tomb.

We'll always keep these memories true  
 And thus appease weird fancy's view  
 Until all hopes have passed away,  
 Until our locks are turning gray ;  
 And may each life be lengthened long  
 To group in this Alumni throng.

### The Swing Under the Old Apple Tree.

UNDERNEATH the netted branches, from a bare  
 projecting limb,  
 In the veteran apple orchard, hung the moulding flaxen  
 swing.  
 And the swing-board, made of hemlock, twirling lightly  
 to and fro  
 Like a dust-cloud in the summer, twirled by every zephyr's  
 blow.

In its branches chirped the robin ; on the clover, tipped  
 with dew,  
 Bees were humming honeyed praises ('tis a thought for me  
 and you) ;  
 Here beneath the creaking branches in the shadow of the  
 tree  
 Rocked we o'er the perfumed billows like a skiff upon the sea.

High into the trembling foliage, swinging for a higher crest,  
 Through those viewless scented billows, each swung to  
 out-do the rest ;  
 Like the heaving frothing surges, as they roll upon the shore,  
 Swoops the stranded restless vessel from the dustless sands  
 once more.

Stroll beneath its fragrant shadows, fling yourself beneath  
 the tree,  
 Drink in all fond recollections when the heart from care  
 was free.

Speak, old tree, the silent record that upon your leaves is  
     pressed ;  
 Speak, I pray, on whispering breezes as I take a boyhood rest.  
 But the doleful vespers fathom through the fading sea of  
     light,  
 While the twinkling lamps of heaven lustre forth their rays  
     more bright.  
 And I slowly grope my pathway through this childhood  
     haunted spot  
 To the cottage and the dear ones who can never be forgot.

### Those School Children.

O H ! schoolmates of those airy days, when life was joy  
     intense,  
 When childish property increased to property immense,  
 When toys and playmates vassals were subjected to our sway,  
 How lordly then would we inspect all in its proud array.  
 We've passed those years of innocence : no more we stroll  
     to school ;  
 No more to idle hours away, or break some new-made rule.  
 No more, no more, we'll disobey the rules we'd instigate :  
 No school room trials must be held o'er us, the profligate.  
 Out in the great expanse of life we've launched upon the sea  
 And there as pilot each must steer to gain his destiny.  
 Such are the thoughts that come to us when, now, school  
     children go  
 Upon the same school paths we trod but a few years ago.  
 In them, we see our ways revived when they stroll to the  
     school,  
 When they, as we, would rather be sprawled by some  
     favorite pool.  
 Alike for them the golden rod presents its richest bloom,  
 And farther on, if hailing them, the cedar waves its plume.

The babbling brook attempts to make itself agreeable  
 And prattles hastily for fear its tale it cannot tell.  
 There's other children at the school upon those same old  
 seats,  
 Dear schoolmates, in the very class where we performed  
 our feats.

Thus, in the great great school of life, when our life's  
 school is o'er,  
 When duty's place that knew us once shall know us then  
 no more,  
 Another form will fill our place with all the joy, the strife,  
 The smiles, the griefs, the sober looks, and then resign  
 his life.

### A Visit to an Old Classmate.

I CAST my college books aside to ease my toiling brain,  
 Which delved all day through classic fields, and delved,  
 it seemed, in vain.  
 'Twas when my mind was thus released that vagrant  
 thoughts occurred  
 Of class-mates of a previous year, methought each voice I  
 heard.

As verdant slopes in early spring refresh our wearied gaze ;  
 As winter only intervenes 'twixt verdant summer days ;  
 So, oft the sight of old class-mates elates the moody mind ;  
 So, 'twixt our several days, we joy their face and voice to find.

Though foreign climes may please the eye and soothe man's  
 inquiry,  
 Yet in those lands his native scenes are still held sacredly.  
 So, as I sat with mind released, how could I, then, negate  
 Its dictates, urging me sometime to visit a classmate.

So, to the home of one I roamed, not very far from me ;  
 Was welcomed at her doorway by the face I wished to see.

Ah, still there lingered on her face the recitation smile,  
The giggling voice, and class-room mien, which time could  
not beguile.

How vividly we then recalled each small and great affair,  
When we contended as classmates, with our apportioned  
share.

How students wisely could reply, aroused from lethargy,  
To teachers' queries, is what both of us could scarcely see.

But, as the farewells must be said by all, I bade adieu,  
And could not help to feel that I was paid and doubly, too.  
For not until we face the tasks that spring in future strife  
Can we distinctly realize the joys of earlier life.

### Moonlight Musing.

O H! those bright moonlight nights when no cloud dims  
the sky,  
And the moon's mellow beams, fairylike, ripple by;  
Like an instinct, your conscience compels you to go  
To some green magic nook where the wild flowers grow.

As you sprawl on the grass in the sweet clover bloom,  
Brimming full with the night that's a mass of perfume,  
Dive away into joy, and, oh! leave o'er you wave  
A rich odor of bloom as in clover you lave.

On such nights, don't the faint airy lisp of a breeze  
Sort of ease all one's cares as it sighs through the trees?  
Don't fond sights, on such nights, flit before our view?  
And we long, oh! we long that they, too, might be true.

Why, how still is the shrill shattered-voiced katydid;  
And the cavernous sound of the toad is forbid.  
And it seems, ah! it seems that the night's just for me,  
So I freely indulge in this bright moonlight glee.

### The Picnic.

GET up bright and early—for it is our picnic day—  
 Ere the streaky orient shames the frowning night away !  
 Then we wonder, ponder, if those misty streaks portend  
 Hours that will be rainy ere our day comes to an end.

Tumble in the coaches that await each coming guest,  
 If you're prompt arriving you will ask, "where are the rest ?"  
 For on such occasions at whatever time you go  
 Some are just as early as some others are too slow.

Off we go rejoicing, 'midst a stifling lot of noise,  
 And our pretty damsels ; we think that we are the boys.  
 Merry is our journey as we roll o'er hill and vale,  
 Through the misty morning, free as any nightingale.

Some do love to clamber 'mongst the rocks of some old  
 glen ;

Others love to tumble through the grass-tufts in the fen ;  
 But, ah me ! the rowing, just to drift along the shore,  
 Through the cooling zephyrs, give me this and nothing more.

At the height of pleasures, if we look toward western skies,  
 Just as was expected, we can see the storm arise.  
 See the hurry, flurry, as the picnickers regain  
 Shelter in the woodland from the fast approaching rain.

See the rowers rowing ; but they only reach the shore,  
 Saturated, dripping, when the rain is almost o'er.  
 Disappointments like these stray among such pleasant  
 hours,  
 And they help to 'liven, though we are caught in their  
 powers.

Evening twilight gathers, and each to his home returns,  
 Weary, though refreshed, by the day with all its turns.  
 One more day is added to our memory's delight  
 And our picnic endeth in the wee small hours of night.



### A Student's Reverie.

THE glow of evening's twilight cast its last reflected ray,  
And earth's great sable curtain hid the scenes of one  
more day ;

The silent night glides undisturbed, save when the old  
clock tower

Peals forth its tardy melody to count the passing hour.

The waning taper's feeble rays gleam ghost-like on the wall,  
And o'er a student's cosy room a dullness seems to fall ;  
The well-worn books are cast aside, the weary student there  
Sits musing by the feeble light within his easy chair.

His mind, freed from his volume's lore, roves through  
another clime

To fashion future so that he may spend a better time.

"O sunny land of vernal bloom, fanned by the fragrant  
breeze,

When may this weary student rest beneath your whisp'ring  
trees?

O land of prattling laughing streams, and silent sober  
pools ;

Give me repose upon your banks where peace supremely  
rules.

Its waving fields, its coolest shade, that land of flowers and  
dreams

Enchant this longing weary mind to bask in its bright  
beams."

The songster's mellow floating lays that ripple through  
the air,

Add sweetness to the scented breeze, and deluge every care.

The old clock peals the midnight hour ; the moon descends  
the west ;

And now the student's reverie merged into dreamless rest.

### Old Penn.\*

OLD Penn, thy many sons revere thy magic memories,  
Thy fondled charms of college days, thy college  
reveries.

They've overgrown, they've twined our hearts like ivies  
on thy walls;

'Tis knowledge, grateful, like that gained within thy classic  
halls.

Thy honored precincts, gray with years, rich with a noble  
past.

Thy cherished halls where lore is dealt regardless of the  
caste.

Thy antique towers of ancient type that moulder toward  
the skies,

Symbolic of thought's higher spheres to which we may  
arise.

There're some who tread thy threshold now to win thy  
proffered crown;

O'er others Alma Mater sways the wand to yield renown.

Alike to all, from varied toil, our restless thoughts will turn  
To dream of thy grand memories, which Sons of Penn  
ne'er spurn.

Thy corridors will e'er resound with student's jolly airs;  
And grave and gay humanity will climb thy winding stairs;  
But as we leave these cherished haunts to combat fate, oh,  
then

We'll dim all writhing care and grief with thoughts of Dear  
Old Penn.

\*University of Pennsylvania.

### The Wind of Autumn.

FOREVER more it chants its dismal dirge  
 In awful tones like a wild ocean's surge.  
 Its temple floor extends o'er land and sea  
 And heaven's blue dome affords the canopy.  
 It loves to shatter, with its boisterous power,  
 The staunch old tree, or slay the trembling flower.  
 The swaying oak, the pine, the poplar tree  
 Are harp strings for its awful melody.  
 The dreaming pools awaken at its tones  
 And leap for safety o'er the crags and stones.  
 The fowl in noisy flocks will congregate  
 In order they their flight may contemplate.  
 The cawing crow attempts with might and main  
 To sway himself with the horizon's plane.  
 The nodding cedar, with its fading hue,  
 Is sadly bidding all sweet scenes adieu.  
 All nature, adult in its garb of brown,  
 Is stripped; its rented garment is cast down.  
 It grasps the golden fruit while on its way,  
 And flings it on earth's bosom to decay.  
 The ghost-like snag of some old towering tree  
 Will sigh, then crumble in its agony.  
 And e'en the sun, in his celestial sway,  
 Mourns ruined scenes, then hastens day away.  
 But still, amid all this, we will revere  
 These soothing winds of the Autumnal year  
 And shout: Blow on ye winds to fit our clime  
 To usher in a grand good winter time.

### Thanksgiving Day Ode.

OH day of days that welds home's severed ties,  
 Oh day of days that turns thoughts to the skies,  
 Oh day of days when friendships we renew,  
 Uniting days since some long long adieu.

Thank God with a sincere thanksgiving prayer  
 For our abundant, our apportioned share ;  
 Meet in his temple on Thanksgiving day  
 With spirit decked in virtuous array,  
 And as the organ-peals roll toward the skies  
 Let, thus, our hearts and thoughts to God arise,  
 For all the surplus with which we are blessed  
 Would all the wants suffice of those depressed.

No torrid summers ever parch our grains ;  
 No frigid winters give us barren plains ;  
 No shackled subjects we to tyrant's reign,  
 But each is lord upon his own domain.  
 These rock-ribbed shores, these fertile vales of ours,  
 This land, ideal of all other powers.  
 What halls of learning to illumine our race ;  
 What sacred precincts to proclaim God's grace.  
 What cheerful homes, the focus of each heart,  
 Though leagues and leagues cause dear ones dwell  
 apart.

Thank God with a sincere thanksgiving prayer  
 That even we are favored with this share.

As birds when winter's tearing storms are o'er  
 Return to their accustomed haunts once more,  
 Thus this day many varied journeys turn  
 From land and sea to haunts for which hearts yearn.  
 Then let the winds churn o'er the restless sea,  
 Dance o'er the land atime its melody,  
 For gathered in the fireside's ruddy glow  
 Is household, friends, the high, the low.  
 The father with a glad decorous look,  
 The mother, skilled, this day has been the cook,  
 The sisters in their holiday attire  
 Vexed by their brothers into feigning ire ;  
 All gather round the table's bounteous fare  
 Assured that each well can perform his share.

This day friend meets to clasp the hand of friend,  
 The absent their remembrances extend.  
 Old games, like buried relics, are disclosed,  
 Though months these games have silently reposed.  
 And once again the home resounds with glee  
 Of young and old, in one grand symphony;  
 Then, like an interlude between the acts,  
 We raid the pail of autumn nuts, the whacks  
 Click to the tick of th' time piece by the wall.  
 Alas! too soon the darkness falls o'er all,  
 And then, ere we seek night's repose, our prayer  
 Ascends to God for this abundant share.

### Christmas Bells.

THEIR echoes fall  
     From turrets tall,  
 From towers grim and gray.  
     The clear air floats  
     The frosted notes  
 Athwart the hallowed day.

    The view afar,  
     Like one vast star,  
 Gleams with the sparkling snow.  
     Symbolic sight  
     All earth in white,  
 Of Him who trod below.

    Sweet bells prolong  
     Your tuneful song,  
 Your quivering melody;  
     Reverberate  
     Your soothing prate  
 As ripples o'er the sea.

To-day, oh bells,  
 Proclaim no knells  
 To quell joys that arise ;  
 May thy strains roll  
 The heedless soul  
 Till it has reached the skies.

### Yule-Tide.

THE wintry days are gath'ring fast,  
 We know it by the northern blast ;  
 The rippling gales of summer days  
 Have swelled to winter's roaring waves.  
 The gloomy clouds are filled with snow,  
 But what care we with hearts aglow ;  
 We love to see the feath'ry air  
 Tumble, then lighten everywhere,  
 And, as the day grows into the night,  
 To see the black fall with the white ;  
 To see upon a frosty morn  
 The splendor of a land forlorn ;  
 The glist'ning waste, the sleeted sight  
 Reveals Jack Frost work all the night.  
 The coveys seek another clime  
 In which to spend their Christmas time,  
 And huntsmen leave the ridge and fen  
 Until their game returns again.  
 These curious arts of winter's ways  
 Add grandeur to December days.

But with the grandeur of Yule-tide  
 The one sacred event, aside  
 From all the joys that we hold dear  
 In these bounds of the hoary year,  
 Is, that we celebrate Christ's birth,  
 The Priceless Gift unto the earth.  
 That holy night a stillness reigns

O'er all Judean towns and plains ;  
 The shepherd and his flock remain  
 Out on the pastured hill and plain ;  
 The tearing winds have changed their moan  
 Into a calm unruffled tone,  
 And stars illume by deeper light  
 The darkness of that holy night.  
 The music of that heavenly band  
 Reëchoes through the frosted land ;  
 The white-robed earth is fittingly  
 Symbolic of His purity,  
 And heaven and earth became sublime  
 The night of the first Christmas time.  
 These days we gladly hail once more  
 And, in return, sigh when they're o'er.  
 The biting cold and landscape sere  
 Make grander still the dying year.

### To An Owl.

THOU scout of realms aerial :  
 Has wisdom taught thee wisdom to display  
 By changing our night into thy day ?

How queer a fowl art thou, old owl ;  
 When morn appears, when man discards repose,  
 You yawn and stagger to your dismal close.

When twilight deepens toward our night  
 The twilight of thy day grows more distinct ;  
 When darkness falls, thy night becomes extinct.

What charms thee in thy eclipsed world ?  
 Our tinted morns and eves you fail to see  
 Portrayed in grandeur o'er earth's canopy.

Why sit thou in thy hermitage  
 Secluded from the noisy world by day ?  
 Is it to contemplate o'er wisdom's way ?

That eloquent grave look of yours  
Implies an intercourse with sages old,  
Who, ancient mystic lore, to thee unfold.

What boding calls thee from thy haunts  
To plunge, unguarded, into night's abyss?  
Does theft or unassuming jaunt prompt this?

Undoubtedly, man does present  
To thee by night a phase more base than light's  
Sham ways, that, too, demand the shroud of nights.

What prompts thy meditative mien?  
Do midnight vices cause thee to withdraw  
And brood o'er mortals in disgusted awe?

And then thy trembling utterance—  
A requiem from distant ghosts—appals  
Like visions of death's narrow gloomy halls.

How like man's spirit, thou,  
'That takes its leave from mortals all alone  
And speeds on rapid wing into the Great Unknown.

NOTE.—The following poem was read at the laying of the corner-stone of the Recitation Hall at West Chester Normal School. It is a white stone from Indiana, and was the gift of the Senior class of which the author was a member. Coming from the state of Indiana explains *Hoosier stone*. As is customary the class also planted a tree, their choice was a *Norway Maple*; it was planted not far distant from the class-stone, and time only need elapse until its roots may *cleave the hall's foundation stone*.

#### '92's Corner-Stone Laying.

WHAT can mean this large throng gathered  
'Round this Hoosier stone of white,  
As these classic Normal vespers  
Echo through the fading night?



Can there be an unearthed relic  
 In this faulty strata found?  
 Can there be a god or goddess  
 Worshipped in this twilight sound?

No: but here, ye pensive hearers,  
 Lies a speechless class memoir,  
 That will speak in distant ages  
 Of a vanished class of yore;  
 When the sound of other voices  
 Echo from yon vale and hill;  
 When these mortal forms are mouldering  
 And these throbbing hearts are still.

When yon roots of Norway maple,  
 Cleave this hall's foundation stone;  
 When these emerald structures crumble  
 'Neath a future breeze's moan;  
 Then this stone will tell its story  
 In an age that's yet to be,  
 To a race that's gay and thoughtful,  
 And we hope, O God, like Thee.

When our pallid forms are changed  
 To the dust, from whence they sprung,  
 Then will '92's class memoir  
 From this voiceless stone be sung.  
 Soon, dear class mate, we must sever,  
 Take our stand in life's great strife,  
 Soon we'll leave these halls of learning,  
 Leave these joys of Normal life.

You and I must face the contest,  
 'Neath this dome of heaven's blue,  
 On this same great field of battle  
 Each must plod his life work through.

It, perchance, may be your duty  
 To be far on Africa's shore ;  
 You and I may wander widely  
 E'er these transient lives are o'er.

Though in Arctic ice-bound regions  
 Some may find their homes to be,  
 Others in the torrid country  
 Fanned by breezes from the sea ;  
 Some may seek a towering mountain  
 On the banks of Alpine Rhone ;  
 Some may seek our fertile prairie ;  
 Some may seek the Red Man's home.

Through whatever clime we've wandered,  
 On whatever soil we've trod,  
 May life be a glorious honor  
 To ourselves, our class, and God.  
 May each bear a virtuous record  
 To that direful judgment throne,  
 That has (through these mortal regions)  
 For its symbol, this white stone.

May we make our lives as steadfast  
 As this stone clasped by these walls :  
 May our deeds be echoing virtues,  
 Echoing through time's mystic halls ;  
 Each a monument erecting  
 That from stains and flaws is free ;  
 One that lauds a noble life-work  
 Throughout all eternity.

### **The Song of the Cricket.**

WHEN, limpidly, the moon-beams fall  
 Upon the sward, upon the wall,  
 Upon the winding silvered stream,  
 Upon all earth as in a dream :

When lark no more in early morn  
 Does sound his dulcet bugle-horn,  
 When jay instead does shriek his lay  
 Athwart some weathered snag all day,  
 When hound is schooled upon the scent  
 And hare that schooling does relent,  
 In short when Autumn days disclose  
 To Nature its well-earned repose,  
 Then o'er the lea, up from the dell  
 Resounds the cricket's warning knell.  
 Though not alone from such wierd haunts  
 It fills the air with its sad taunts ;  
 But, like the mouse when fields are bare,  
 It seeks man's home, man's garnered share,  
 Here to the glowing hearth it goes  
 To trill in monotone its woes.  
 Why may the cricket's song incite  
 Such saddening thoughts at dawning night ?  
 It does not joy like marriage bells  
 But saddens like the funeral knells. —  
 Ah, take a retrospective glance  
 To see why, thus, its song enchants.

'Tis twilight in the month of May,  
 All Nature, like a bride, is gay ;  
 Down the old road in thought we'll go,  
 The old road where the daisies grow,  
 And where the blushing wild rose blooms  
 —A trail where Nature mixed perfumes—  
 For here along the old road's marge  
 Are apple orchards old and large,  
 Whose crimson bloom, like briny seas,  
 Perfumes the fond caressing breeze.  
 Like stationed guards in robes of white,  
 The cherry trees enhance the sight.  
 And jumping 'mid the banks of green  
 The cricket, silent, may be seen.

But as the weeks and months pass by  
 A shifted scene one may descry,  
 For spring, by every breeze allured,  
 Has grown to Autumn, staid, matured ;  
 And, like the harvest workman, brown.  
 Again at twilight now adown  
 This old road, famed, we pass until  
 We reach a cottage by the hill :  
 A cottage, as in story known,  
 Antique ; we hear the brooklet's tone ;  
 The ivy clammers to its wall ;  
 A turn poetic hangs o'er all.  
 Within we see the hearth-fire low,  
 Since yet it needs not winter's glow :  
 The old clock is announcing time  
 More feebly, far, than in its prime ;  
 Its second childhood has returned  
 Perhaps, with briskness undiscerned.  
 Once on those chairs, those relics now,  
 A mother sat with anxious brow  
 And soothed a babe in years gone by  
 To brighten its sweet fevered eye.  
 Its pain to mirth she would decoy  
 And change its joy to greater joy.  
 And from that hearth amid that scene  
 The cricket's song would intervene.

That babe has now become a lass,  
 No neighboring dames her grace surpass.  
 Her speaking eyes like heaven's blue,  
 Resplendent like the morning dew.  
 Her golden locks in ringlets flow  
 And in the sacred sunshine glow  
 Alike a cloud-verge sparkling bright  
 With molten gold at dawning night.

Within the hearth-fire's dimness sit  
 Two forms,—the evening moments flit,—

Two form that mitigate the gloom  
 That gathers in the old hearth-room.  
 The lady and her lover there  
 Where once was mother's guarding care  
 Now sit and wile the hours away ;  
 Converse about their bridal day.  
 The lingering parting at the door  
 Betrays the happy hours gone o'er.  
 And from that hearth all through that scene  
 The cricket's song would intervene.

These lovers' marriage day has come  
 With joyousness, with festal hum.  
 The hearth-room is the marriage hall ;  
 The festive board with fruits of fall  
 Groans, while along the old hearth-side  
 Are placed the blushing groom and bride.  
 Well wishes pass from young and old.  
 The beauty of the bride 's extolled.  
 Then when the festive joys are o'er  
 The kith and kin turn home once more.  
 But from that hearth all through that scene  
 The cricket's song would intervene.

Time passes on and varied scenes  
 Supplant the young blood's futile dreams.  
 Some with a happier life are blest :  
 Some find the early days the best.  
 Each has though at his own command  
 A power to make his life-work grand.  
 Thus was it with those happy two  
 As years sped on their pleasure grew.  
 The ivied cot became their home,  
 Here no wish tempted them to roam.  
 A lord and lady now were they  
 Without the royal vain display.  
 They knew a joy undimmed by woes  
 That hover in the princely throes.

Their palace was the cheerful cot.  
 Their manor was the garden plot.  
 The heirloom chairs became a throne.  
 The babbling brook, a storied Rhone,  
 For near along its mirrored-tide  
 The cottage dynasty had died.  
 Here grandpa watched the grandchild's plays  
 And grandchild watched his grandchild's ways,  
 Ere since the ancestral abode  
 Had been this cottage by the road.

The cycles speed, the maid to-day  
 Beholds her golden locks turn gray,  
 Unlike the vernal garb of white  
 That grows to Autumn's golden sight.  
 Oft sat this couple by the hearth  
 There they recounted by-gone mirth.  
 Around that hearth the children played;  
 Around that hearth he wooed the maid.  
 Here legends of old times were told  
 Of Indians and of warriors bold,  
 Of havocs that the witches wrought  
 When they the wheezing peddler sought,  
 Of how the witches traveled through  
 The air and scaled the chimney-flue,  
 Then how the whining dog had died  
 For barking when the witch he spied.  
 Not far away out on the hill  
 The old folks say a witch lives still.  
 Around that hearth transactions passed  
 Sufficient to make volumes, vast,  
 And from it 'mid that varied scene  
 The cricket's song would intervene.

The Autumn came, profuse again,  
 We hear the nuts drip in the glen.  
 The russet corn is placed on shocks.  
 The crevice flowers desert the rocks.

The squirrel stores his food supply  
 To eat as winter thunders by.  
 Within the cot we look once more  
 To see two who in days of yore  
 Sat in the hearth-fire's dimness there  
 With hopes of a contracting pair.  
 The old clock still proclaims the hour,  
 Still plainly shows declining power.  
 In this dim room we hear a tone  
 A feeble voice, a dying moan ;  
 Around the couch the household stands  
 And weeps and grasps the pallid hands  
 As spirits, two, aside the hearth  
 Attempt to free themselves from earth.  
 And doubly doleful is the night  
 For two sweet spirits took their flight.  
 And 'mid this sad, this dying scene  
 The cricket's song would intervene.

The cricket's chirp thus may appal  
 When sounded from its crannied hall.  
 It seems a voice of other times  
 Speaks from some distant mystic climes,  
 The loved ones voices, those who've gone  
 To where our souls are hastening on.  
 And it recalls the old home's bliss,  
 The fireside tales that none could miss,  
 The annual jaunts into the woods,  
 To store up winter's fireside foods,  
 The clubbing of the chestnut boughs,  
 The wrangles on the clover mows.  
 Thus to the varied fleeting throng  
 Suggestive is the cricket's song.











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